

Virginia Nielson

February 7, 2007

Interviewed and transcribed by Elaine Carr

Elaine: We're here at the Crossroads Senior Citizen Center and I'm talking with Virginia Nielson from Roosevelt. We're going to get her oral history. Today is February 7, 2007.

Virginia, tell us who you are and who your parents are?

Virginia: Well, I'm Virginia Mortensen Nielson. My parents are Senor Mortensen and Mattie Moon Mortensen. They came to the Basin in 1918 in June. I was born January 1, 1917. I don't remember very much about the trip over.

Elaine: Do you have memories of what they told you the Basin was like when they first came here?

Virginia: When they first came here Myton was the most important town in the Basin. It had been started by the army. In fact, it was settled long before Roosevelt, because the entire area was still an Indian Reservation. The troops were in Ft. Duchesne, and the Indian Service was in Myton. There were doctors available through the Indian services. At one time Myton had boardwalks. It had a couple of opera houses. It had livery stables. It had several grocery stores. It was a very thriving young community, which is very different from what it is today. When my parents came the major canal and basic road structures had been started, you see the original settlers came here in 1906. The land was taken from the Reservation in 1906, and my folks didn't come until 1918. Those early building structures had been started.

Other than that, schools were still one room. Roosevelt had some buildings with two or three grades because they were larger. The only high school in the county was the Duchesne County High School which stood up on the hill where the bus garage for Duchesne County schools is now. Kids from Upalco, Mt. Emmons, and other places "batched" just like when you go away to college, and this was only high school.

Elaine: So, is that where your family lived, in Myton?

Virginia: No we lived on a farm about half way between Myton and Roosevelt. Myton was our beginning address and then by the time I had started to school, Roosevelt was our address. There was a shift in population taking place.

Elaine: What did your father do for a living?

Virginia: My father was a farmer. My mother a homemaker and a teacher.

Elaine: Did she teach at the school in Duchesne?

Virginia: The Duchesne County High School was in Roosevelt, it was the only high school in the

county so it was given that name. There used to be a big "D" up on what we call the "R" hill now, and later they put legs on it and make it into an "R". No, she never did teach there; she taught in the elementary system. In fact, she was likely one of the first teachers in the area where we lived.

Elaine: Did you have brothers and sisters?

Virginia: Yes, I'm the oldest. I have two brothers and two sisters, and I'm ninety and we're all still alive.

Elaine: What's their names?

Virginia: Senor Jr., Keith, Mary Lee, and Shirley.

Elaine: What are some of the memories that you have of the area as you were growing up as a child?

Virginia: My most prominent memory and the one I hold most dear is going to school with my mother when I was four and a half years old because she was the teacher and it was the only school. There had never been one in that community. She started teaching and then I started school when at five and a half because they had to have enough warm bodies to justify a school. That is my most prominent memory. The others are just sort of same-ish for everybody else. But this was unique.

Elaine: Did you like school?

Virginia: I loved school. I grew up to be a teacher for thirty years.

Elaine: And where did you teach?

Virginia: Sounding rather -----, I taught everything but boys PE. I taught fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, everything there. I taught high school, home economics, and I taught most of my life in junior high school. While I was in junior high, I taught home economics, I taught art, I taught English, history and science. Everything but boys PE.

Elaine: You're well rounded. Let's talk some more about when you were a child. The home you grew up in was a farm?

Virginia: Yes!

Elaine: What were some of your responsibilities?

Virginia: To get in the wood and the chips each afternoon. If my father got up early in the morning and it was cold and the chips and the wood weren't in, having been brought in during the day when it was light, he wasn't happy.

Elaine: Did you have cows?

Virginia: Yes, we had cattle and sheep. He started out being a cattleman and later he became a sheepman. And, later still just an agriculture farmer.

Elaine: Did you have responsibilities as far as the farm?

Virginia: To help my mother, because she had a lot to do. I did a lot of cooking. I did a lot of general household things that girls do. They were learning experiences all the way through.

Elaine: Did you have neighbors that were close that you associated with?

Virginia: Yes, relatively close for living on the farm. On the first place where we lived, our closest neighbors were a quarter of a mile away. Later our neighbor was right across the street and another one up a quarter of a mile and another one up a half mile. This is relatively close for rural living at that time.

Elaine: Do you have special memories of activities with other children?

Virginia: Yes, lets talk about my fun school. I remember their was no school available. I don't know if you're aware of the country, but where we were was four and five miles from Ioka. The old rock church, it's been converted into a home, there were two school houses and these young people from our area were riding horses four and five miles to attend school. Only those who really wanted an education made this effort. Classes only went to eighth grade. So, they decided that there were enough people in this farther out area that it should have its own school. The rule was that if the community would put a school together for a year, then the county would take over and furnish a building, a teacher, and assume responsibility for education. My mother had been a teacher in Iowa where she grew up and so she was selected to teach. I don't know if she volunteered, I don't know how she was selected, but she was. I remember vividly, my dad having the horse hitched to the buggy. The little buggy looked very much like the ones that you see people back East (Quakers) that don't drive in cars. It looked a lot like that. Dad was jovial and sort of a fun joker and he would pick me up and toss me up in the air and catch me and then put me on the seat with a big flourish and help mom up and away we'd go to school. She drove a mile and a half. The eighth grade boys took care of the horses. There was always food and water. As long as it was nice weather I played outside and went to school. I had a desk at the far back corner where I could go in and set. There was always paper and crayons and I could draw on it, but I couldn't ask questions and I couldn't make any noise. When it got too cold to play outside, then I was left with a family where there were still preschool children.

About Christmas she stopped teaching. I think she was pregnant, and you couldn't teach school then. My sister wasn't born until the next July. Mom could have taught school, but not at that time. So, from then on it was just regular school. But this one, it was a fun place. The county came in and brought a school. They skidded one of the buildings down from Ioka, because those were the kids that had been going in that building. They skidded it down on the snow and put it up. The first year I walked a little over a mile. Dad decided that that was not a good thing. I got kind of caught in a snow storm coming home one night and there wasn't anyone to walk with. I

was alone and I had to cross a hollow and a little creek. His farm was small; he bought an adjoining farm and we moved into a house right next to the school, just a fence between us and it. From then on school wasn't a problem. I went to this one room school through the sixth grade.

Elaine: Who was your teacher after your mother quit?

Virginia: A different one every year.

Elaine: Do you remember any of them?

Virginia: I remember faces, I cannot remember their names. Most of them were married women. There was a man teacher, but he was teaching that year I didn't go. He took over for mother and finished the year. I think just getting the building warm and I think just the physical hardships warming that school up and everything, was too much for her.

Elaine: Do you remember when you were a child anything about the city, Myton, Roosevelt or towns nearby.

Virginia: Like I said Myton was very thriving.

Elaine: By the time you was a child was Roosevelt starting to develop?

Virginia: Roosevelt was just a dream in Ed Harmston's eyes. The road didn't even come through Roosevelt. The old road, the old Neil Highway, went down the south side of the Duchesne River from Myton to what we call the Black Bridge across the river and up to Fort Duchesne. It wasn't until they started using the other road that Roosevelt came. Ed Harmston had given some property and some other families had four sections that joined down on the corner where the old hospital used to be. Four families gave property, forty acres I think each to make the city of Roosevelt. Broderick was one, I don't remember who the others were.

Elaine: It's fascinating to know what the town was like then. We have a lot of pictures of Myton and it's hard to believe that it was like that.

Virginia: Oh, it was busy. The building where the Three legged Dog Saloon is at one time was an elegant general store. They had the prettiest ceiling of punched tin and big fancy designs. I would go in and my eyes would be up there. And the man that ran it, I never went in he didn't give me an all-day sucker.

There was a couple of drug stores. We always sat down, that's where I learned about banana splits. And, there was a boardwalk. When you crossed the street you didn't have to walk in the mud in Myton. It was very busy busy little town. Somewhere I have a list of all of the buildings that were in Myton.

Elaine: I know there was three banks, and my maiden name was Fisher, and I remember there was a Fisher Hotel.

Virginia: I remember the Fisher Hotel. There was two big hotels. It was a really fun town. We

used to go often. We went in the buggy and then later I remember when dad, just about the time I started school, came home one day with a little black thing that coughed and belched and made noise and he told me it was a car. It was a little runabout car, one seat, it had a little trunk like thing in the back, windows made out of some kind of oil cloth kind of with icing glass so you could see out. The sack of salt my dad always carried was a windshield wiper and no heat. Things are better now.

Elaine: Yeah, a car is way different these days than it was then.

Virginia: Much better.

Elaine: Then did he use the car from then on pretty much to travel?

Virginia: Yes for travel he did. He still went to town with the wagon when he needed farm stuff, because it wasn't a large enough car to bring home his seed for the field. He'd go for that but when the family went, we went in the car.

Elaine: Do you have any special memories of holidays or family traditions as a child?

Virginia: I remember one family tradition was watermelon busts on our lawn. It took place in the afternoon when the sun made a shadow out there. Large groups of people came and dad brought in tubs of watermelons. We raised them. Everybody came. I have pictures of a piece of watermelon very big and nibbling up through it. But, those melon busts were a lot of fun. Everyone looked forward to them each summer.

We made a great big fuss about Christmas. It was a very special day. We didn't have a lot of close family so we made it a family thing. I had a great uncle who lived here for just a few years. I remember one year going up to where he lived. He took us up in a sleigh and the horses harnesses had bells on. We had big hairy robes to keep warm in. I got tucked in between my mother and father and I wasn't cold at all. That was kind of fun. That was the only time I remember going anywhere in a sleigh, other than that it was always a wheeled vehicle, either horse drawn or gas powererd.

I remember when the first airplane landed over on the South of Myton Bench. Everybody rushed out to see it.

Elaine: How old were you?

Virginia: I wasn't very old. It was before I was ten.

Elaine: I bet that was amazing.

Virginia: Oh the men got excited, the women didn't. I'll tell you the men got excited about "an airplane". The plane was one of those little double winged ones. The pilot stood up on the wing and did some kind of dumb show off things, and we thought it was wonderful. The men were so excited about that.

And then I remember the old UBIC's. The original ones over at Ft. Duchesne. When you went to

the UBIC people camped. There were tents; you wouldn't believe the amount of tents that there were. But, we had too many chores, living on a farm, we'd drive over and back each day. But, there was some wonderful programs. It was educational. Of course, we didn't have the kind of communication we have now. The university would send their extension people out. There would be demonstrations on sewing, there would be demonstrations on cooking, there were exhibits. It wasn't a fair in that there was competition but there were exhibits. You'd see corn and things that different people had brought in. And then the men would have lecturers come down from the university and they would tell them how to improve farming and improve different things. It was the Uintah Basin Industrial Convention, and that was important. They had horse pulling contests. Later they turned into tractor pulling contests, but the horses were so much fun. Oh, you really had to go see the horse pulling contest. A man from Neola won every year. He had that great big team. I guess they were Belgians because their hoofs had great big layers of hair around them. I believe that's the Belgian. Oh, they were big horses, and they would get down almost on their knees and pull.

Elaine: So, you enjoyed going to the UBIC?

Virginia: I loved it. Looked forward to it, I'd be a good girl for a whole three days.

Elaine: So, it was kind of a tradition that you went every year?

Virginia: Absolutely! Never missed one. Then of course when the war came, it was stopped, and later restarted. But during the war years there were no UBIC's.

Elaine: What do you remember during the war time? How things changed?

Virginia: Well, by then I was married. Everything had changed by then. But, for kids it would change too. There was all kinds of limitations. We didn't have as many limitations because we had a farm. Meat was a big limitation. Sugar, my mother hoarded sugar and saved it from her daily allotment so she could do a bit of canning. She learned to can with honey. It wasn't very satisfactory. It worked but it wasn't as tasty. When sugar came available we quit using honey.

Elaine: Was that honey business here early on?

Virginia: It was here when I was very young. Yes, it was one of the first industries. And, the Peterson Honey, down in Myton exhibited honey at the World's Fair in Paris. They won first prize. And that's where they started using the slogan, "The World's Best Honey".

Elaine: That's interesting.

Virginia: That's something I don't think a lot of people know. For a long time they had bees. The man's name was Neils Peterson.

Elaine: What about when you went to high school, you went to the Roosevelt High School?

Virginia: I went to the Duchesne County High School which was in Roosevelt. It was where the

bus garage is now. The school was a big brick building. It's been there as long as I remember. I rode a bus. By then, there were busses in some areas. A bus started in Myton and of course Highway Forty as we know it, where it leaves those two benches and that big gradual curve into Roosevelt, that wasn't built until in the thirties. And up until then Highway Forty went down the north side of the bench on these ninety degree curves and on into State Street here into town. Yes, I did go, I rode a bus, it picked me up and all the other kids. It was the only bus I think that carried high school kids. There was no bus coming from up in the upper country. Upalco kids and the Ioka kids batched in town. They just lived with friends or family or batched.

Elaine: What were your favorite subjects?

Virginia: History and then Home Economics. In fact my major in college was Home Economics. I loved those classes. I liked school. I loved the literature part of English particularly well. I wasn't fond of the diagraming but I did love the English. I had a neat neat teacher. It was a very informal situation; we called her Aunt Matt. She has posterity still living here in town. Yes, school was wonderful. I had a Physical Science teacher and math teacher who was absolutely the best teacher that I ever had, college or anywhere else. He was a Samoan. He had come over as a convert to the LDS church. He had graduated with honors from BYU. He had gone to one of the districts on the Wasatch Front, I don't know which one. The class was all seated and when he walked into the classroom and he was dark, the students got up and walked out. It became our very very good fortune. He was hired out here and taught his full life out here. He ended up being a justice of the peace on the side. He was county commissioner on the side.

Elaine: Do you remember his name?

Virginia: Yes, Charles Sehwencke. He was really neat. I had great appreciation for that man.

Elaine: Having good teachers and good examples makes us want to learn.

Virginia: It does, and I even got good grades in geometry. He had a unique way in his math classes. He felt that some people needed more help than the other. He started his plan and after school was started in the fall and he had people categorized. If you were an A student you only had to come to class on Friday's. But you spent class time in a library supervised study group. He would give you your assignments and you came back on Friday and the assignments were corrected and you passed a rather rigid test. If you passed the test you could do it another week. It was a weekly thing. If you were a B student, you came on Tuesdays and Thursdays. C students came on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday and the other kids that needed help came every day. That was happening in 1934; wasn't he before his time?

Elaine: That's a wonderful way to help those that need help and let the ones that don't need help do their work.

Virginia: It was kind of a honor to be a Friday student. So you got rewarded emotionally or by extra help where needed. Everyone gained from it.

Elaine: Do you have anymore experiences of high school? Were you involved in activities or

clubs?

Virginia: Home Ec. Club. That was about the main activity. With transportation being like it was, school didn't have the activities they have now.

Elaine: Was it the FHA.

Virginia: They didn't have that title as yet. The Future Farmers were started and we met with them. We cooked them a banquet. We did certain things in collaboration with them but we weren't an auxiliary group yet. We didn't go to meetings and things. That came very shortly after I left.

Elaine: Do you remember anything exciting in town when you were a teenager going to movies or dances?

Virginia: Oh yes, the Saturday night movie. I remember going to the Ten Commandments when my mother had to read the sub-titles to me. Utopia Theater, the Uintah on Main is still there. They hold movies in it a couple times a week. It's been upgraded. But, yes I do remember the movies. Saturday was so special, we got our work done and came into town, the whole family. Mother did the shopping that she would need, both for the house and for her sewing and the things she needed. Dad did his shopping for his work and he usually ended up down at the Con-Wagon getting supplies and things. Then we went out to dinner at night and to the movie on Saturday night. On Saturday night they had a little tiny "short" or news reel running, like a chapter of a book every Saturday, so we had to go. Then had these picture show clips of all that happened in the world that week. That was our only visual concept of world affairs.

The Deseret News and the Salt Lake Tribune were delivered tp the drug store each day for resale. They were often a day late. Dad always picked up the Sunday Tribune at the store. They cost ten cents. Dailies were five cents. For years we had the Myton Free Press. When it became defunct we had the Roosevelt Standard.

Elaine: Did they have dances and things like that when you was a teenager?

Virginia: Yes, we had a lot more dances than they do now. Even when we lived on the farm, there in the school house, there was a man who would play the harmonica and the banjo. He would put the harmonica up on a stand. He furnished the music. I think they gave him a dollar or two, some of the people chipped in a little money. People danced; they did square dances and waltzes and lots of babies lay on the seats while the parents danced. If you watch a local program on Saturday night on one of the stations. They play polka music and the people are doing the same thing my parents did, little tiny kids out dancing a long with the whole family.

Elaine: That sounds fun.

Virginia: It was fun, and frequently there would be some refreshments, cookies, lemonade. Different people would bring different things. Babies were asleep on the benches. We had a lot of fun. We had a lot more social life than we do today.

Elaine: It was a healthier social life than we have today.

Virginia: It was, it was. And my mother and dad found time to visit neighbors. I remember going to different neighbors homes in the winter. When it got colder they would take the quilts into the house, put them by the wood burning stoves, and get them all nice and warm, then dad would take them out and make a bed in the bed of the wagon and put us down there and put some quilts around us and away we'd go home. We had a lot of fun. Life was not dull. Kids today think it was dull. Here's an example, I had a little great grandson who had to write a paper and he called me up for an interview and he wanted to know if we had computers. I told him, "no we didn't." He said, "Well you had electric typewriters." "No" I said, "I had to learn to type on a manual typewriter, one where I had to push each key down." He sent me a copy of the paper that he wrote and he said, "She had to type on an old fashioned typewriter. I'm glad I didn't live then."

Elaine: I remember even when I went to high school and they were hard to push down.

Virginia: They were hard. You had to push a certain way and you had to push hard enough or you didn't get a letter. I have an antique older than the kind I used in my basement today. I need to find something to do with it. It shouldn't just sit there. It's a good relic for somebody and should be put in a permanent place.

Elaine: I love hearing about your history and the fun things you did and what Roosevelt and Myton were like. After high school did you meet your husband, was he from around this area?

Virginia: No, I met him in college. I went directly from high school to college. That's one of the unique things in my life. I was one of the few girls who did that. These were real depression times. There was nothing to do and if you had some kind of a talent you were more likely to find a job. Just "day" people were a dime a dozen. Without anything special to do I went away to college. I went to Snow for two years and then to Utah State and graduated from there. If I taught elementary school I could have just attended three years of college but I wouldn't have a degree, I'd have what they called a "Normal Certificate". But because I wanted to do high school I had to get a degree. It was a fairly unique thing at that time.

Elaine: Then you came back and immediately started teaching school?

Virginia: I did. I came back and taught one year. In college I had met the man I was going to marry. In today's world we would have gotten married and gone to college together. But, there was no way to make money and we knew we had to finish college. That was a goal, so we went "steady" for four years. By the year I was teaching he was within a year of finishing his degree. It was not legal at that time for married women to teach. It was the middle of the depression and jobs were saved for heads of families. They were having a real hard time with home-ec and ladies gym teachers because men don't do that very well.

So anyway, he dared me to get married. We took the dare and sort of eloped and I taught the last six months illegally. When they offered their contracts that spring, the superintendent said. "If Miss Mortensen wants to put another ring by that one she's wearing we would be glad to have her back." But, my fiance's job was such that there was no way I could stay. He worked for the

Bureau of Reclamation and we moved every six months and worked on investigations. We spent the summer in the cool country and winters in warm country. That lasted until we had children in school and it couldn't last any longer either. You don't do that to kids.

Elaine: When you settled with your family, where did you live, right here close in Roosevelt? You said you had a farm.

Virginia: We lived out on the south side of the North Myton Bench. We didn't stay there very long because we didn't have a big enough farm. We bought a house in Roosevelt. Basically for most of my life in the basin I've been in town.

Elaine: Tell me about your children.

Virginia: I have two children. I have a daughter. She's my oldest. She married a forest ranger and has lived pretty much all over the west and Alaska. Because she lived there I've been able to spend two or three weeks in Alaska in the summer. It's exciting and beautiful. At the present time she's out of Kalispell, Montana, in a little town called Eureka. We talk frequently, she was down not too long ago and she'll be down again soon. I used to do a lot of travel. I'd go spend a week or so with each of them every summer after Jack died. But that's not convenient anymore and I think they need to come to me.

My son is in Decatur, Alabama. His family were here for Christmas with me. His daughter lives in Rome, Italy. She brought her fiancee. Four of them came and we had a ball. We took a trip down to Mesa, Arizona, and went down into the Squaw Forest. It was just fun. We took three days to go to Phoenix which is an eight hour drive. There was so many things we wanted to show this young man in our Southern Utah. It's so beautiful.

I have one granddaughter in Rome. I have three grandsons. I have two grandsons that are engineers and one who is an orthodontist. I have a great, great, granddaughter, five generations of us. I got to hold her at Thanksgiving time. My grandson drove over from Denver and picked me up and took me over and the next week brought me back so I could spend Thanksgiving with him. Neat kids!

Elaine: So, when you were raising a family, do you have special memories of your children when they were little and traditions and activities.

Virginia: Yes, there's so many of them, I don't know that there's one that was special. They were my kids so they were the best kids in the world but they were really quite normal kids. What happened to "Joe Blow" across the street, a different version happened to us. They belonged to the Four-H clubs, they belonged to the scouts, they belonged to the groups. Their dad was a scout leader and I was a Four-H leader. We just did the things that people do, not anything very different, but lots of fun. I remember Carol tottering across the yard, because you had to have high-heels, it was just absolutely a must. I remember seeing her staggering across and thought how much nicer she'd walked if her heels had been down where they should have been. I remember things like that. They were neat kids and they're still very special people.

Elaine: So you started working at the high school?

Virginia: My first year was high school. Then the next four years were elementary school. After high school I didn't teach for ten years and then went back. When I went back to renew my certificate I did an elementary. I taught down at Myton for four years. Then Mr. Jensen, who was principal at the junior high, called me and asked me if I wanted to come over and be his home-ec teacher. I ended up in junior high the rest of my life. Which is the worst place for a teacher but the best place for a family. In high school, so many of your nights are taken with high school activities. So much centers around after hours work. Junior high where family is concerned doesn't do that. Junior high kids don't know who they are and neither does any one else, which makes for some unusual situations. Teaching Junior High is never dull.

Elaine: Do you have any special memories of teaching or co-workers, or students?

Virginia: Yes, I have wonderful memories. Lots of them. In fact I have a special memory that's really kind of fun. There was this one young man, eighth grade in English. He wasn't a mean kid but, he loved to push the envelop just right to the edge. He graduated, I never heard of him, I knew he was around town. He did some rather nice things, he became a very stable community member. I was sitting there in my home one day a few years ago and somebody came to the door and there this young man stood. "Do you like fish?" I hadn't seen him for twenty years, hadn't spoken to him. And yes, "I love fish." "Well I got some, I've been down fishing in Pelican. Give me something and I'll bring them in." and he did. A few days later the same thing only this time it was asparagus. Not too long after that he caught some more fish. I thought, "This is pretty neat." Then, I ran into him, he was leaving, having gotten a haircut as I was going in to have mine done. And, I said to him, "You're so darn nice to me. What happened?" He looked at me kind of chagrined, and he said, "I was so damn mean when I was a kid I thought I would make it up to you." That's one of my fun teaching memories. And he's still making it up to me. I haven't told him that he's over paid, I'm just accepting.

Yes I have wonderful memories. So many of my friends are people that I taught. We were doing something; I was teaching something in relation to Relief Society and somebody piped up in the back of the room, "Sound just like ninth grade." They're wonderful memories.

Elaine: Do you remember any organizations or events going on in the community?

Virginia: Not as many as there are now. There were the usual church organizations. There were some boy organizations, more than girls. Four-H was about the thing that girls depended on mainly. They didn't have a girl scouts that was comparable to the boy scouts. I don't think they do yet out here.

Elaine: But Four-H was a big thing.

Virginia: Four-H was for everybody. Those are the organizations that I worked with. I went as a child and I worked as an adult.

Elaine: Do you remember any community issues that was a hot issue and how it was resolved?

Virginia: I haven't thought about those. I'm sure there were some.

Elaine: What about when you were talking about when the road was built, Hwy 40, Do you remember anything about that.

Virginia: Yes, I remember I was teaching over in Roosevelt, driving in from the farm and I remember flat tires. They graveled it and it was sharp. It just chewed those tires up. I remember my flat tires and other peoples flat tires. We avoided it as long as possible but sometimes you have to go to a certain place. I did summer projects. Kids decided on a project and then I did the supervision. I visited them every week, so I did lots of traveling in the summer. I remember that road being absolutely terrible. I was changing a tire one day; my husband had taken me out and given me a lesson in tire changing. And here I was with a flat tire and a gentleman came along in a car, a MAN came along in a car. He said, "It looks like you're having trouble." Here I am in my little white dress and my nylons and my little white sandal shoes out changing a tire. I thought, "Oh here comes Sir Galahad." He said, "Well, it looks like you're doing a pretty good job." and drove on. Yeah, I do remember.

Elaine: How did it change things as far as the community?

Virginia: Not a great deal. Because people who lived on the highway didn't live on it any more. No it didn't change anything.

Elaine: Tell me what is your very fondest memory of life.

Virginia: My family. I can't separate them into individual things. I've lived a wonderful life. It's been centered in family. I'm still living a wonderful life. I have the most wonderful support group. Who else ninety years old can live totally by themselves without having a wonderful support group. It doesn't happen. I drove my car down to talk to you today; nobody brought me. I think maybe right now my main excitement is that I'm still doing it by myself.

Elaine: Yes, and you look like you can do it for a long time still.

Virginia: I hope one day I just fall over and I don't get old. There's a difference.

Elaine: What do you enjoy most in life?

Virginia: People and my hobbies. I garden. I sew. I make quilts, I'm going from here and quilt with some friends for the rest of the day. I'm going to go to the store to buy something to feed us because we do a little pot luck. We'll sew until this afternoon. Things like that, just life.

Elaine: Have you learned anything from your life experiences?

Virginia: Yes, I have learned that life is good. I have also learned that the bad things, the things that we object to are as important as the things that are good because that's what makes us who we are. I have learned that a person is a sum total of the experiences they have had, both good and

bad. Just go for it and do it.

Elaine: You're a remarkable person and interesting. I've enjoyed visiting with you about the area and about your family.

Virginia: I got thinking about things. I hadn't thought about mom starting that school and all of a sudden it dawned on me, why she was a pioneer, going to this little school and holding it together. As I look back things that weren't important are important. We're putting together some family histories for the younger family. They come over and we do recordings. We do that because we are aware that things need to be said. I know I wish there were things I had ask my parents and I didn't. When they moved into the Basin it took them two weeks. They drove a herd of fifty or sixty cattle. Dad drove this little run-about car and he brought mother and me. I think they called the cars Roadsters. They had a seat with a top over it and a little box in behind that you put stuff in. They had a couple of hay-racks that he had loaded with the farm machinery and the household things that they brought over that were pulled with teams of horses. It took them two weeks. They couldn't go any faster than the cattle could go. And I wish I would have asked them more about that trip.

My brother and my nephew and myself, have driven the trail as closely as possible by car. We took a recorder and a camera and as we traveled ver followed as much as we could where they had came and recorded the things that dad had told us that I remembered but I wish I would have ask more. I know dad would scout ahead. He would know where the cattle could noon. They had a rather long noon because the cattle had to water and rest. In the morning he would put mother and me in the car and then he would go to this nooning place and set up for her so she could have lunch ready when the men came. There were two drovers, I believe. They would have lunch and we would pack it all up and he would go to where they were going to spend the night and do the same thing over again. Then in the morning as soon as breakfast was over he would move things. Just doing that every day was how they came out here. There would have been a lot of good stories there that I don't know. I know that it could have been very interesting. They thought it was a party. They really did.